## LISTING OF CLAIMS

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1. (**Currently Amended**) A method comprising:

receiving a data signal formatted according to a data communication protocol at a first data communication platform;

determining if the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform; and

indicating to a second data communication platform to **receive** ~~**bypass**~~ the data signal **at a by-pass path of a filter engine of the second data communication platform** if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform.

2. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim 1, wherein the data signal is a first data signal and the data communication protocol is a first data communication protocol, the method of claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a second data signal formatted according to a second data communication protocol at the first data communication platform;

determining if the second data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform; and

indicating to the second data communication platform to ~~**filter**~~ **process** the data signal **with the filter engine** if it is determined that the **second** data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving comprises receiving the data signal formatted according to the data communication protocol at a network processor.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said determining comprises determining if the data communication protocol is included in a pre-stored plurality of data communication protocols.

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5. **(Currently Amended)** The method of ~~claims~~ **claim** 1, wherein said indicating comprises tagging header information to the data signal.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein said indicating **to the second data communication platform** further comprises indicating to a network switch engine.

7. (Original) An apparatus comprising:

a first data communication platform to receive a data signal formatted according to a data communication protocol, the first data communication platform to determine if the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform; and

a second data communication platform, coupled to the first data communication platform, to receive an indication for receiving the data signal at a by-pass path of a filter engine of the second data communication platform if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said first data communication platform comprises a network processor, the network processor implemented in software.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said second data communication platform comprises a network switch engine, the network switch engine implemented in application specific integrated circuits (ASICs).

10. **(Currently Amended)** An article comprising:

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a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of instructions that are machine executable, wherein when executed, ~~said executing instructions operate~~ **cause a machine** to receive a data signal formatted according to a data communication protocol at a first data communication platform of a device, determine if the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform, and indicate to a second data communication platform **of the device** to ~~bypass~~ **receive** the data signal **at a by-pass path of a filter engine of the second data communication platform** if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The article of claim 10, wherein the data signal is a first data signal and the data communication protocol is a first data communication protocol, the article of claim 10, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions further ~~operate~~ **cause the machine** to receive a second data signal formatted according to a second data communication protocol at the first data communication platform, determine if the second data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform, and indicate to the second communication platform to ~~filter~~ **process** the data signal **at the filter engine** if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform.

12. **(Currently Amended)** The article of claim 10, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the machine** to receive the data signal formatted according to the data communication protocol at a network processor, the network processor implemented in software.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The article of claim 10, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the machine** to determine if the data communication protocol is included in a pre-stored plurality of data communication protocols.

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14. **(Currently Amended)** The article of claim 10, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the machine** to tag header information of the data signal.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The article of claim 10, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the machine** to indicate to a network switch engine, the network switch engine implemented in application specific integrated circuits (ASICs).

16. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:

a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of instructions that are machine executable, wherein when executed, ~~said executing instructions operate~~ **cause the apparatus** to receive a data signal formatted according to a data communication protocol at a first data communication platform, determine if the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform, and indicate to a second data communication platform to ~~bypass~~ **receive** the data signal **at a by-pass path of a filter engine of the second data communication platform** if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the first data communication platform; and

a processor coupled to the storage medium to execute the instructions.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the data signal is a first data signal and the data communication protocol is a first data communication protocol, the apparatus of claim 16, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions further ~~operate~~ **cause the apparatus** to receive a second data signal formatted according to a second data communication protocol at the first

data communication platform, determine if the second data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform, and indicate to the second communication platform to ~~filter~~ **process** the data signal **with the filter engine** if it is determined that the data communication protocol is supported by the second data communication platform.

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**18.** **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the apparatus** to receive the data signal formatted according to the data communication protocol at a network processor and to indicate to a network switch engine, the network processor implemented in software and the network switch engine implemented in application specific integrated circuits (ASICs).

**19.** **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the apparatus** to determine if the data communication protocol is included in a pre-stored plurality of data communication protocols.

**20.** **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said ~~executing~~ instructions ~~operate~~ **cause the apparatus** to tag header information of the data signal.